

The Simsbury Scoop



February 2016, www.simsbury-ct.gov, on Twitter @TownofSimsbury
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Image courtesy of the
Connecticut Chapter of
the American
Society of Landscape
Architects.

www.ctasla.org

Ethel Walker Woods Stewardship Plan receives award

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects ([CTASLA](http://www.ctasla.org)) has announced the winners of its 2016 Connecticut Professional Awards competition. CTASLA conducts the awards competition each year to recognize excellence in landscape architectural design, planning and analysis, communication, and research. To be eligible, an applicant must be a landscape architect or designer in the state of Connecticut, and the entrant or project location must be

based in Connecticut.

"These award-winning projects showcase the incredible talents of Connecticut landscape architects," said Barbara Yaeger, president of CTASLA and principal of B. Yaeger, LLC, of Madison, CT. "Our members design beautiful spaces that encourage people to get outside, explore their surroundings, and interact with other members of the community; simultaneously, they are stewards of the land, protecting natural resources, creating habitat, and helping the world address such

concerns as climate change."

Winners, announced at the chapter's awards event on December 8, included:

For Landscape Planning & Analysis: Milone & MacBroom, Inc. of Cheshire received a *Merit Award* for the Ethel Walker Woods Stewardship Plan for Simsbury, CT.

Involved in the project were: Town Engineer Jerome F. Shea; Town Recreation Director Gerry Toner; Landscape Architect Michael T. Doherty, PLA; and Wetland

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Scientist Matthew Sanford M.S./PWS.

Project Description:

This project developed an Open Space Stewardship Plan for three adjoining town-owned parcels that create a contiguous natural area of 600 acres. The parcels provide access to a multitude of outdoor activities within and adjacent to unique native ecological habitats. The Stewardship Plan focuses on preservation and protection of the parcels' natural resources while promoting sustainable public access for the purpose of recreation, education, and enjoyment.

The subject parcels contain a number of unique site features and varied habitat including forest stands, vernal pools, wetlands,

watercourses and open meadows, all of which lie within an important aquifer recharge zone that supplies over 10,000 town residents with drinking water.

The parcels were in need of programmatic improvements to ensure their ecological integrity and recreational longevity. To achieve this, an in-depth inventory and analysis was conducted to accurately map the parcels' boundaries, habitats, access points, uses, and wayfinding.

Once mapping was updated to accurately convey the parcels' attributes, a condition analysis was performed to strategically address issues such as lack of wayfinding, erosion, unauthorized trail blazing, and invasive

species colonization.

The Stewardship Plan focuses on balancing habitat preservation with public access including universal trail accessibility, which is often neglected in natural public settings. People have cared for these natural areas because they have had access into them. The Stewardship Plan continues to integrate people with nature while improving parcel identity, access, use, wayfinding, and preservation efforts.

The Stewardship Plan will serve as a model for other town-owned and managed open spaces.

The jury for this year's competition was comprised of members of the Texas Chapter of ASLA.

Teen space dedicated at the Simsbury Public Library

The Teen Space at the Simsbury Public Library has added something any teen craves — a little more privacy. The Teen Space on the upper level of the library has been in existence since the library's renovation in 2008, but a wall separating the space from the rest of the area is new.

"It makes it more individually their space," said Sara Ray, the teen librarian.

Anyone can use the space, but it is dedicated to the teens. And it's not necessarily a quiet space. Ray said one event, a video game tournament, had 42 participants.

Also added were four new comput-

ers. The wall, which is mainly glass, isn't just a wall: it's a changing work of art as the teens can use chalk markers to draw or write on it (and it washes off). Ray said she has seen an increase in the use of the space since the wall went up in the fall, but was dedicated on January 9. She said program attendance was always high, but more kids are coming there to do homework or hang out

with friends, as the space also offers comfy seating.

Ray said the additions were made possible by the Investor Angels that are part of the Friends of the Simsbury Public Library. The wall was made possible by a donation in memory of Jewel Gutman.

The town's public works department and engineering department also assisted.



Teen librarian Sara Ray in the teen space at the Simsbury Public Library.

Elizabeth Lyra Ross – History of African American Music: Spirituals to Contemporary

Elizabeth Lyra Ross presents an entertaining, educational and inspirational history of African American music, combining singing and an interpretive narrative to give historical context to each piece. She moves from several selections of Negro Spirituals of the African slaves to the period following World War I represented by the Harlem Renaissance, Broadway music composed by an African American, and a song set to Langston Hughes' poem, "I, Too, Sing America". The Civil Rights Movement and the diversity of the African American community are portrayed by a song called "Battle of Birmingham" and a piece by jazz singer Nina Simone. Ross closes with "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands", encouraging all of us to work towards embracing ethnic and cultural diversity.

Ross graduated from Trinity College in Hartford. She did graduate study at the Indiana University School of Music in Bloomington. Her international

career has included the opera roles of *Aida*, *Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly*. She has appeared with the New York Metropolitan Opera, and she was in the New York City Opera production of *Porgy and Bess* that was nominated for an Emmy Award on the "Live from Lincoln Center" series. Her oratorio repertoire includes works by Verdi, Britten, Mozart, Mendelssohn and Handel. She has four CDs. In July 2014, Ross, who was the first African American female member of The United States Army



Band and Chorus, appeared with them as a guest soloist on two concerts, including one on the steps of the U.S. Capitol and the Alumni Concert at Fort Myers in Arlington, VA (on YouTube). She currently lives in Collinsville with her husband, Dr. John C. Norman. Maestro Doris Lang Kosloff, Artistic Director of Connecticut Concert Opera, will accompany Ross on the piano.

**Wednesday, February 10
7:00-8:30 p.m.
Simsbury Public Library
Registration is suggested at
860-658-7663 x2200 or [click here](#).
Free and open to all.**

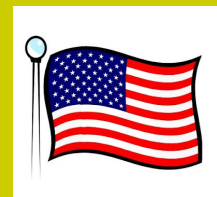
February Dates to Remember

February 2: Groundhog Day
February 8: Chinese New Year
February 10: Ash Wednesday
February 14: Valentine's Day
February 15: Presidents' Day
February 24: Flag Day



◆ **Simsbury Town Hall, Eno Memorial Hall, and the Simsbury Public Library are closed February 15.**

◆ **The Simsbury Public Schools are closed February 15 and 16.**



AARP tax help is for all ages

The AARP Tax-Aide program will be offered again this year through a partnership between the Simsbury Senior Center and the Simsbury Public Library. The Tax-Aide program provides trained and certified tax volunteers who work one-on-one with taxpayers to prepare and electronically file both federal and state tax returns free of charge.

The program will be coordinated by the Simsbury Senior Center and host-

ed by the Simsbury Public Library.

To participate in this tax assistance program, taxpayers must first book an appointment by calling the Simsbury Senior Center at 860-658-3273.

Appointments are available from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Thursdays February 4 through April 7.

The AARP Tax-Aide service is free of charge and open to anyone who needs assistance regardless of age or town residence.



Tax Reminder

The Simsbury Tax Department reminds residents that **Monday February 1, 2016 is the last day to pay taxes without a penalty. (Postmarks of 2-1-2016 will be accepted).**

The tax office hours are:

Monday, February 1, 2016
8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Don't wait in line, you can pay online at www.simsbury-ct.gov/tax
It's free with an electronic check



February 29, Initial Budget Presentation

Listed are the dates and times for the Regular Budget Workshop meetings of the Board of Selectmen for 2016:

- ♦ Monday, February 29 at 5:30 p.m.
- ♦ Thursday, March 10, at 5:30 p.m.
- ♦ Saturday, March 12, at 8:00 a.m.

The meetings will be held in the Main Meeting Room located in the Simsbury Town Hall.

Residents are encouraged to attend. If you are unable, remember you can reach out to local officials through email or the telephone.

